

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8405

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 1, 2007

Brief Description: Providing for the study of legislative and financial issues regarding the Columbia River Crossing Project.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Swecker, Murray and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/26/07, 3/01/07 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8405 be substituted therefor, and the substitute concurrent resolution do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Murray, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Berkey, Clements, Delvin, Eide, Holmquist, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, Sheldon and Spanel.

Staff: Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

Background: The I-5 Columbia River Bridge was built in 1917 and no longer meets capacity or seismic vulnerability requirements. Congestion in the vicinity of the bridge is currently four to ten hours per day. More than 300 reported crashes occur annually in the vicinity of the bridge, most being attributed to congested conditions, vertical grade changes in the bridge span and narrow shoulders.

In 2001, the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership began bi-state joint planning efforts to address problems in this corridor area. Planning efforts have been continued through the Columbia River Crossing Project and related projects have been completed and are under way in the vicinity of the I-5 Columbia River bridge.

Summary of Bill: A joint interim workgroup is established on the Columbia River Crossing Project. The eight members of the group must consist of four from the Senate and four from the House of Representatives, to be selected by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives respectively.

The work group is intended to educate citizens and legislators on the importance of the project, study legislative issues that relate to the project and support bi-state, bi-partisan and multi-jurisdictional planning, coordination, and funding efforts.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The workgroup will report its findings to the Legislature during the 2008 Legislative Session.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED SUBSTITUTE AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Transportation): A clause referencing other projects not directly related to the Columbia River Crossing is removed. The Senate and House of Representatives Transportation Committees must study legislative issues, including financial issues regarding the Columbia River Crossing Project. The creation of a joint interim workgroup to educate citizens and legislators, and study issues relating to the project is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: CON: There is a desperate need for additional crossings across the river and this will require bi-state participation. There are some incorrect statements included in the resolution. It is not the Legislature's job to educate citizens.

Persons Testifying: CON: Senator Benton.